

CALIFORNIA'S
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
PERSONNEL PROGRAMS



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CALIFORNIA'S EMS PERSONNEL PROGRAMS

Thank you for expressing an interest in California's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel programs. We hope this will be of assistance to you and will answer the most commonly asked questions concerning California's Paramedic and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training and certification requirements. Additional information may be found on our website at: www.emsa.ca.gov.

ABOUT THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

The EMS Authority is the department within California state government that is empowered to develop and implement regulations governing the medical training and scope of practice standards for the following emergency medical care personnel:

- ❖ Emergency Medical Technician (EMT or EMT-Basic)
- ❖ Advanced EMT (AEMT)
- ❖ Paramedic
- ❖ Public Safety Personnel:
 - Firefighters
 - Peace Officers
 - Lifeguards

Additionally, the EMS Authority operates California's Paramedic Licensure Program. This program coordinates with the National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) to administer written and skills exams to all initial applicants for Paramedic licensure in California, and also issues licenses to all qualified initial and renewal Paramedic applicants.

LOCAL EMS AGENCIES

Actual day-to-day EMS systems operations are the responsibility of the local EMS agencies. EMS systems are administered by either county or multi-county EMS agencies, which follow regulations and standards established by the State EMS Authority. Local EMS agencies are responsible for certifying EMTs and AEMTs (however, EMTs employed by public safety agencies, such as fire departments and law

enforcement agencies, may be certified by their departments – certification is valid statewide). Local EMS agencies' certification and accreditation requirements are explained on the following pages.

CALIFORNIA EMS PERSONNEL

In California, public safety personnel (firefighters, peace officers, and lifeguards) often administer prehospital medical assistance. These professionals are required by law to be trained, at a minimum, in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

An EMT, as part of an EMS system, is a specially-trained and certified or licensed professional who renders immediate medical care in the prehospital setting to seriously ill or injured individuals. California has three levels of EMTs: EMT (or Basic), Advanced EMT, and Paramedic. The following chart provides further information regarding the substantive differences between each of the three EMT categories. However, keep in mind the chart only summarizes the qualifications and requirements for each category.

**MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY, TRAINING AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL
TECHNICIAN (EMT) AND PARAMEDIC CATEGORIES IN CALIFORNIA**

	EMT (basic life support)	AEMT (limited advanced life support)	PARAMEDIC (advanced life support)
Student Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 years of age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 years of age • High school diploma or equivalent • EMT certificate • Possess a current Basic Life Support (CPR) card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 years of age • High school diploma or equivalent • EMT certificate
Minimum Training Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 hours minimum • ~ 110 hours didactic • ~ 10 hours clinical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88 hours minimum • ~ 48 hours didactic and skills lab • ~ 16 hours hospital clinical training • ~ 24 hours field internship to include 10 ALS patient contacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1090 hours minimum • ~ 450 hours didactic & skills lab • ~ 160 hours hospital clinical training • ~ 480 hours field internship to include 40 ALS patient contacts
Minimum Scope of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient assessment • Advanced first aid • Use of adjunctive breathing aid & administration of oxygen • Automated External Defibrillator • Cardiopulmonary resuscitation • Transportation of ill & injured persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EMT skills and medications • Use parilaryngeal airway adjunct • Institute IV catheters, saline locks, needles or other cannulae (IV lines) in peripheral veins • Glucose measuring • Sublingual nitro • Aspirin • Glucagon • Inhaled beta-2 agonists • Activated charcoal • IV D50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EMT and AEMT skills and medications • Laryngoscope • Endotracheal (ET) intubation (adults, oral) • Glucose measuring • Valsalva's Maneuver • Needle thoracostomy and cricothyroidotomy • Nasogastric intubation (adult) • 21 medications
Notable Optional Skills (added at the local level)		Those previous EMT-IIs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lidocaine hydrochloride • Atropine sulfate • Sodium bicarbonate • Furosemide • Epinephrine • Morphine sulfate • Benzodiazepines • Synchronized cardioversion/defibrillation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local EMS agencies may add additional skills if approved by the EMS Authority
Written and Skills Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered by the National Registry of EMTs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered by the AEMT certifying entity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered by the National Registry of EMTs
Length of Certification or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 year certification without retesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 year certification without retesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 year certification without retesting

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY, TRAINING AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL
TECHNICIAN (EMT) AND PARAMEDIC CATEGORIES IN CALIFORNIA

Licensure			
Refresher Course/ Continuing Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hour refresher course or 24 hours of CE every 2 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 hours of CE every 2 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48 hours of CE every 2 years
Certification & License Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified locally/ valid statewide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified locally/ valid statewide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed by State/ valid statewide; local accreditation

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (EMT)

California law requires all ambulance attendants to be trained to the EMT level and many fire agencies require firefighters to be EMT trained. EMTs are often used as the first dispatched medical responder in a tiered emergency medical system.

Training

Training for EMTs is offered at the local level by approved training programs. A list of approved training programs may be obtained through the EMS Authority via telephone, mail, or from our web page. Training hours consist of a minimum of 120 hours, broken down into 110 classroom and laboratory hours and 10 hours of supervised clinical experience. Students must have five (5) documented patient contacts during their clinical training.

Testing

In order to become certified as an EMT, an individual must first pass the approved written and skills examinations. The skills portion of the exam must be administered by an approved EMT training program. The written portion of the examination is computer based and administered at an authorized testing site. The EMT certifying examination in California is the National Registry EMT-Basic exam.

Certification

After passing the written and skills exams, an applicant may be certified through the local EMS agency or through a public safety agency, both of which issue an EMT certification card. (They are also known as certifying entities.) Certification is valid for two (2) years from the date of passing the NREMT exam and is recognized statewide.

Recertification

Every two (2) years, an EMT must provide the certifying entity with proof of 24 hours of an approved refresher course or 24 hours of EMS approved continuing education units (CEUs), and be signed off as competent in ten skills every two (2) years. Proof of completion of these requirements allows the certifying authority to recertify an EMT.

Reciprocity

Individuals from out-of-state are eligible for California EMT certification by meeting the following requirements:

1. Individuals who possess a current and valid National Registry EMT-Basic, or National Registry EMT-Intermediate or paramedic certification or a current and valid out-of-state EMT-Intermediate or paramedic certification, and complete the application process for EMT certification. No additional training or testing is required.
2. For individuals without a National Registry EMT-Basic certification who do have a valid out-of-state EMT certification will need to successfully complete an approved EMT refresher course and pass the National Registry EMT-Basic examination and complete the application process for EMT certification.

Scope of Practice

An EMT is trained and certified in basic life support practices. Basic life support (BLS) means emergency first aid and CPR procedures which, at a minimum, include recognized respiratory and cardiac arrest and starting the proper application of CPR to maintain life without invasive or until advanced life support (ALS) is available. Automated external defibrillation (AED) is now part of the basic scope of practice.

Optional Skills

After receiving the appropriate training, EMTs may become locally approved in the following optional skills when approved by the local EMS agency's medical director:

- Use of the paralaryngeal airway adjunct
- Administer naloxone
- Epi Pen
- Administer the following medications:
 - Epi Pen
 - Naloxone
- Mark 1 Kits
 - Atropine
 - Pralidoxime Chloride

ADVANCED EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (AEMT)

An AEMT is trained and certified in limited advanced life support (LALS) practices. In rural or sparsely populated areas of California, AEMTs may be the only responders who provide immediate medical intervention.

Training

Training programs for AEMTs are limited because AEMT is an optional level of service in California. The minimum training hours for AEMTs is 88 hours. The minimum number of hours for each portion of the training program is listed below, although most programs exceed this amount.

Didactic and skills	48 hours
Clinical and field/ Internship	<u>40 hours</u>
TOTAL	88 hours

Testing

To become certified as an AEMT, an individual must pass written and skills exams administered by the local EMS agency.

Certification

After passing both the written and skills exams, an applicant may be certified through the local EMS agency by issuance of an AEMT certification card. Certification is valid for two (2) years from the date of issuance. A small number of EMS agencies recognize AEMTs in their jurisdiction. Certification of AEMTs is recognized statewide.

Recertification

Every two (2) years, an AEMT must provide the local EMS agency with proof of completion of 36 hours of approved continuing education units (CEUs) and complete the verification of skills form.

Reciprocity

An individual who possess or has possessed a valid EMT-Intermediate or Paramedic licenses from another state may

be eligible for certification when the individual has proof of training for California AEMTs, has passed written and skills exams, completed a criminal history background check, complete an application, disclose any certification or licensure action, provide proof of affiliation with an approved EMT and/or pre-existing EMT-II service provider, and complete a pre-certification field evaluation.

Scope of Practice

AEMTs are certified in the use of LALS skills. LALS includes all EMT skills and medications, use of parilaryngeal airway adjuncts, institution of IV catheters/ saline locks/ needs or other cannulae (IV lines) in peripheral veins, glucose measuring, sublingual nitro, aspirin, glucagons, inhaled beta-2 agonists, activated charcoal, and IV d50.

Optional Skills

Advanced EMTs with expanded scope, previousl known as EMT-IIs, may do the use and do the following:

- ❖ Lidocaine hydrochloride
- ❖ Atropine sulfate
- ❖ Sodium bicarbonate
- ❖ Furosemide
- ❖ Epinephrine
- ❖ Morphine sulfates
- ❖ Benzodiazepines
- ❖ Synchronized cardioversion/ defibrillation

PARAMEDIC

A paramedic is trained and licensed in advanced life support (ALS) practices, which include the use of expanded skills and medications. The paramedic is typically employed by public safety agencies, such as fire departments, and by private ambulance companies. Paramedics are employed throughout the state's EMS system to provide ALS prehospital care.

Training

The minimum number of hours for each portion of the training program is listed below, although most programs exceed these amounts:

Didactic and skills	450 hours
Hospital and clinical training	160 hours
Field internship with 40 ALS Patient contacts	<u>480 hours</u>
TOTAL	1,090

Testing

In order to practice as a paramedic, an individual must pass the National Registry of EMTs' written and skills exams. Tests are given on a regular basis throughout California; contact the Pearson Vue testing center at: www.vue.com/nremt.

Licensure

California law requires an individual to be licensed by the EMS Authority in order to practice as a paramedic. Licensure is valid statewide. Individuals seeking licensure should apply directly to the EMS Authority. Note: All licensees must undergo a California background check and must submit proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency.

Accreditation

In addition to State licensure, a paramedic must be locally accredited in order to practice in any California county. Accreditation is orientation to local protocols and training in any local optional scope of practice for the particular local EMS agency jurisdiction. Paramedics must apply for

accreditation directly to the local EMS agency.

License Renewal

Paramedics must complete a minimum of 48 hours of approved continuing education units (CEUs) every two (2) years to maintain licensure.

Reciprocity

Individuals who possess a current paramedic certificate/ license from another state, territory, or county, or from the National Registry of EMTs, are eligible for paramedic licensure in California when they submit documented proof of successful completion of the training required in California for paramedics, successfully pass the National Registry written and skills exam, and complete all license requirements. If an individual does not have the minimum number of training hours required by California, then enrollment in a paramedic training program may be required to obtain the additional hours.

Scope of Practice

Paramedics are trained and licensed in the use of advanced life support (ALS) skills. ALS includes all EMT and AEMT skills, use of laryngoscope, endotracheal and nasogastric intubation, Valsalva's Maneuver, needle thoracostomy, administration of 21 drugs, and other skills listed on page 2.

Optional Skills

The EMS Authority can approve the use of additional skills and administration of additional medications by paramedics upon the request of a local EMS medical director.